

28 JUL 1975

# More details on CIA and Castro murder plot

By the Associated Press

Washington  
The former general counsel for the CIA said recently that in 1962 he told then Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy about an aborted agency plot with the Mafia to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

Lawrence R. Houston told reporters that his impression was that Mr. Kennedy was learning of the plot for the first time, but that he "wasn't terribly perturbed about it." Mr. Houston quoted Mr. Kennedy as saying, "If you're going to have anything to do with the Mafia, come to me first."

Both the plot, which involved underworld figures John Russell and Sam Giancana, and the meeting with Mr. Kennedy have been reported previously, but Mr. Houston's comments marked the first time a former agency official has publicly described in detail his knowledge of events surrounding CIA efforts to kill Premier Castro.

Mr. Houston spoke with reporters after an appearance before a House Government Operations subcommittee in which he was asked to explain a 1954 agreement between the CIA and the Justice Department which delegated to the agency authority to decide whether prosecution of a possible criminal act by one of its agents could be halted in order to protect sensitive information.

He said that during his 1962 meeting with Mr. Kennedy there was no recommendation by either Mr. Kennedy or the CIA to prosecute those involved in efforts to kill Premier Castro. According to Mr. Houston, the agency decided to inform Mr. Kennedy of the plot when Justice Department efforts to indict Mr. Rosselli and Mr. Giancana on unrelated matters threatened to disclose the plot.

As described by Mr. Houston, the plot was designed to kill Premier Castro in conjunction with the planned Bay of Pigs invasion, but that as far as he knew the would-be assassins never got to Cuba.

In his subcommittee testimony, he said he would not have recommended prosecution of

an agency employee even for murder if that would have exposed secret operations.

But after giving that answer to a hypothetical question, he told a reporter that none of the nine cases the CIA decided not to prosecute involved murder.

Mr. Houston, who was the CIA's general counsel from 1947 until 1973, testified before the House Individual Rights subcommittee on the CIA agreement with the Justice department giving the agency power to decide not to prosecute lawbreaking by agents when CIA operations would thereby be exposed.

The CIA had told the subcommittee in a letter released by chairwoman Bella S. Abzug (D) of New York that it found 30 cases of alleged lawbreaking by CIA employees during the time of the agreement and all but nine of them were referred for prosecution or other action.

Representative Abzug asked Mr. Houston during the hearing if he would have decided not to prosecute criminal conduct "all the way up to murder" under the agreement.

Mr. Houston replied that he would have.

CIA 1.03 Houston

LAWRENCE

CIA 4.01 ASSASSINATION

ORGI MAFIA

Kennedy, John F.